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Pakistan: Population Problems and Political Stability

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Pakistan: Population Problems and Political Stability



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A Research Paper

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This paper has been prepared by [redacted]
Office of Near East-South Asia Analysis. Comments
and queries are welcome and may be addressed to
the Chief, South Asia Division, NESAI [redacted]

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**Pakistan:
Population Problems
and Political Stability**

Overview

*Information available
as of 4 November 1982
was used in this report.*

Population problems will continue to work against efforts by the Pakistani Government to achieve national integration and to establish a politically stable and economically prosperous nation through the end of the century.

- Population growth, with or without the presence of the Afghan refugees, will continue high and surpass 152 million by the end of the century. Rapid growth will offset government efforts to improve social and economic conditions and could increase alienation from central government authority.
- National, provincial, and city governments will be unable to cope with the problems of uncontrolled rapid urban growth. Rural migrants will continue to flood the cities, which will experience further deterioration in infrastructure and services. Agitation by coalitions of urban interest groups could again reach regime-threatening proportions as it did prior to the fall of Presidents Ayub Khan in 1969 and Bhutto in 1977.
- Interprovincial antagonisms, which have plagued every government since independence, will be intensified as an ever larger population competes for a share of already limited government services. Punjabi domination of the federal government and the armed forces will continue to exacerbate deep cultural and ethnic divisions among the provincial peoples.
- The approximately 2.5 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan will increase pressure to settle outside the camps as their stay lengthens and prospects dim for an early return to Afghanistan. The Pakistani economy and society will be severely taxed to absorb them into the mainstream of Pakistani life, particularly if they move out of the frontier areas into the more heavily populated and ethnically unrelated provinces of Punjab and Sind. We do not expect a further substantial refugee influx from Afghanistan, either as a result of the war or as a result of direct Soviet policy. If there is a new wave of refugees, however, we believe that failure of the international aid organizations, heavily funded by the United States, to effectively accommodate them could increase US-Pakistani tensions.

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- Major contributions to the Pakistani economy from remittances of the 1.5 million Pakistani workers overseas (now netting more than \$2 billion yearly) will continue to be threatened by uncertainty in the job market in the Middle East. Return of the workers would reduce remittances, a vital part of Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings, as well as further strain the already overloaded domestic job market.

We do not expect any of these demographic forces to be the sole cause of a violent replacement of the Zia regime. We believe instead that the buildup of demographic pressures will increase frustrations throughout Pakistani society that could translate into periods of social and economic unrest, which, in turn, could snowball into wider antiregime demonstrations with serious political implications for the Zia regime or its successors.



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**Pakistan:
Population Problems
and Political Stability**

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Pakistan has experienced exceptional demographic, social, and political turbulence in the 35 years since it obtained independence. The secession of the eastern wing to form Bangladesh in 1971 resulted in the loss of more than half of the country's citizens, and for the second time in less than 25 years, a newly constituted Pakistan had to start over. Ethnic and linguistic differences have long divided the people of the region, have periodically erupted into political violence, and have made the building of a sense of national identity at times appear impossible. Major refugee migrations in 1947, 1971, and most recently since 1979 have had lasting social and political effects. Labor migration to the Middle East, involving hundreds of thousands of workers since the mid-1970s, has already affected economic structures and may accelerate social change in the future as increasing numbers of relatively prosperous workers return (see figure 2).

government will continue to fail to provide promised social services—education, jobs, health care, housing, internal security—for the demographically young population.

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Pakistan's Fifth Five-Year Plan (1978-83) admits that, because the needs of the rapidly growing population continue to outstrip resources, less than half the population receives the basics of education and health care as measured by an overall literacy rate of only 24 percent, organized health coverage for somewhat less than 50 percent, and a safe water supply for 27 percent of Pakistan's people. (According to five-year plan statistics, the situation is particularly bad in rural areas: a literacy rate of 17 percent, health coverage for 32 percent, and potable water supply for 14 percent.) Limited resources to meet the exponentially growing needs will increasingly strain the ability of the government to respond adequately. In our view, pervasive unrest caused by these conditions eventually will be exploited by dissident groups.

Rapid Population Growth: The Bottom Line

We believe that the causes of Pakistan's explosive population growth—high birth rates and a rapid decline in death rates—will be sustained and will translate into high growth at least through the end of the century. Total population as of mid-1982 was 94.1 million, including an estimated 2.5 million Afghan refugees, according to a US Census Bureau estimate. The Census Bureau expects the 1982 growth rate of 2.9 percent to decline slightly to 2.7 percent over the next 20 years and the total population to reach 156 million by the year 2000. The Bureau estimates that, even if all the refugees were to return to Afghanistan immediately, the Pakistani population would still reach 152 million by the end of the century (figure 3).

The projected addition of nearly 3 million people annually to Pakistan's population during the 1980s will, in our judgment, overwhelm government efforts to secure the support of the people by raising their social and economic level (table 1). The Census Bureau projection that the under-15 age group will remain at the existing high level of about 43 percent of the total population virtually ensures that the

Pakistan's failure to convince couples to have fewer children or to institute a family planning program acceptable to a majority precludes a significant drop in the population growth rate through the end of this century. According to US Census Bureau estimates, fertility will decline from about 7 in 1982 to 5.5 children per woman by 2000, but this decline will have little impact on this century's growth rate and, in our judgment, will make no difference in the magnitude of social and political problems. Pakistani and US population specialists have found, based on fertility surveys conducted periodically from 1962 through 1975, that 20 years of family planning programs have brought about no tangible reduction in fertility rates. A 1975 fertility study revealed that only 6 percent of women of childbearing age used contraceptives. Nor does there appear to be an unmet, widespread demand for family planning services, according to recent survey data.

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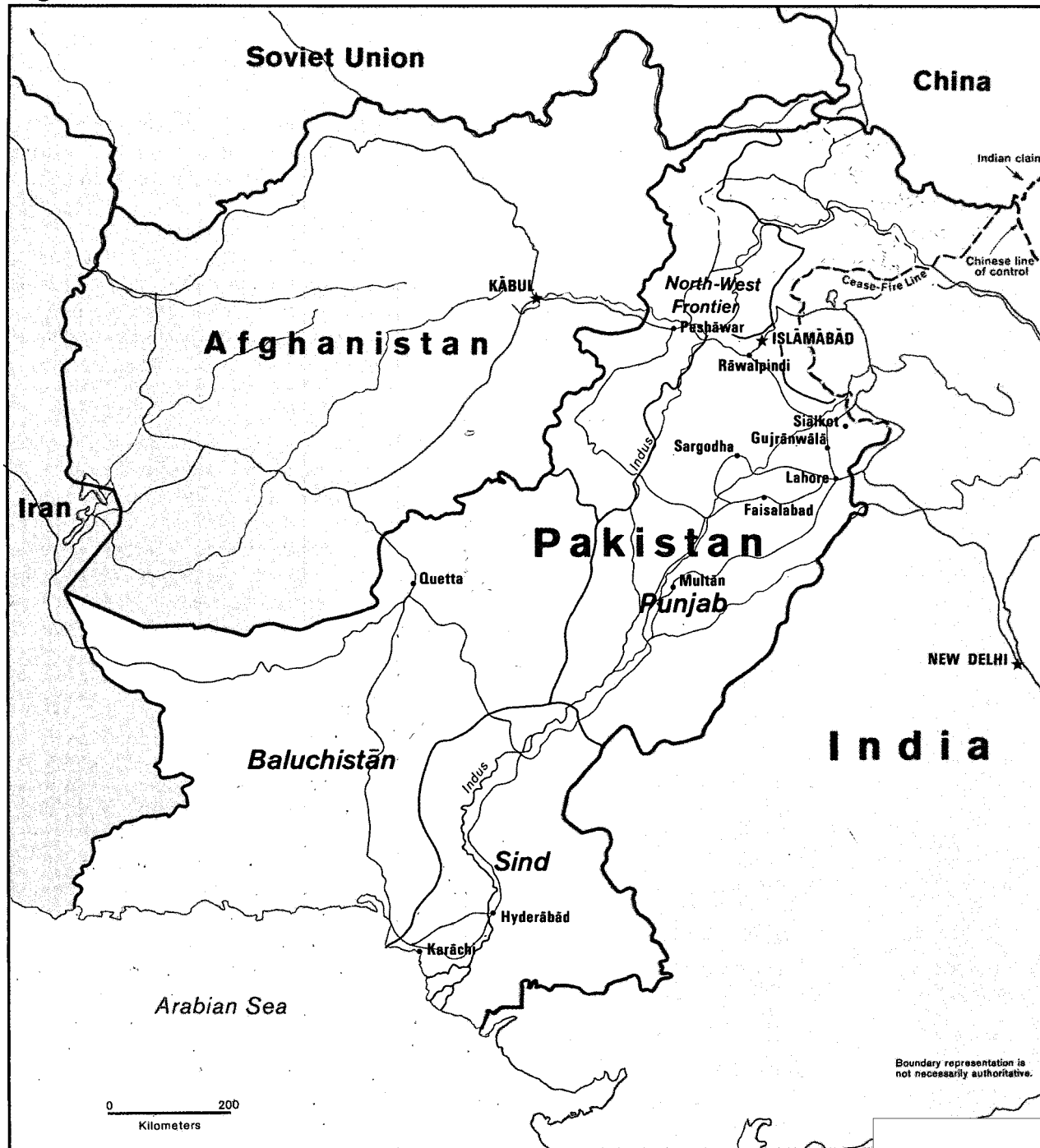
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Figure 1

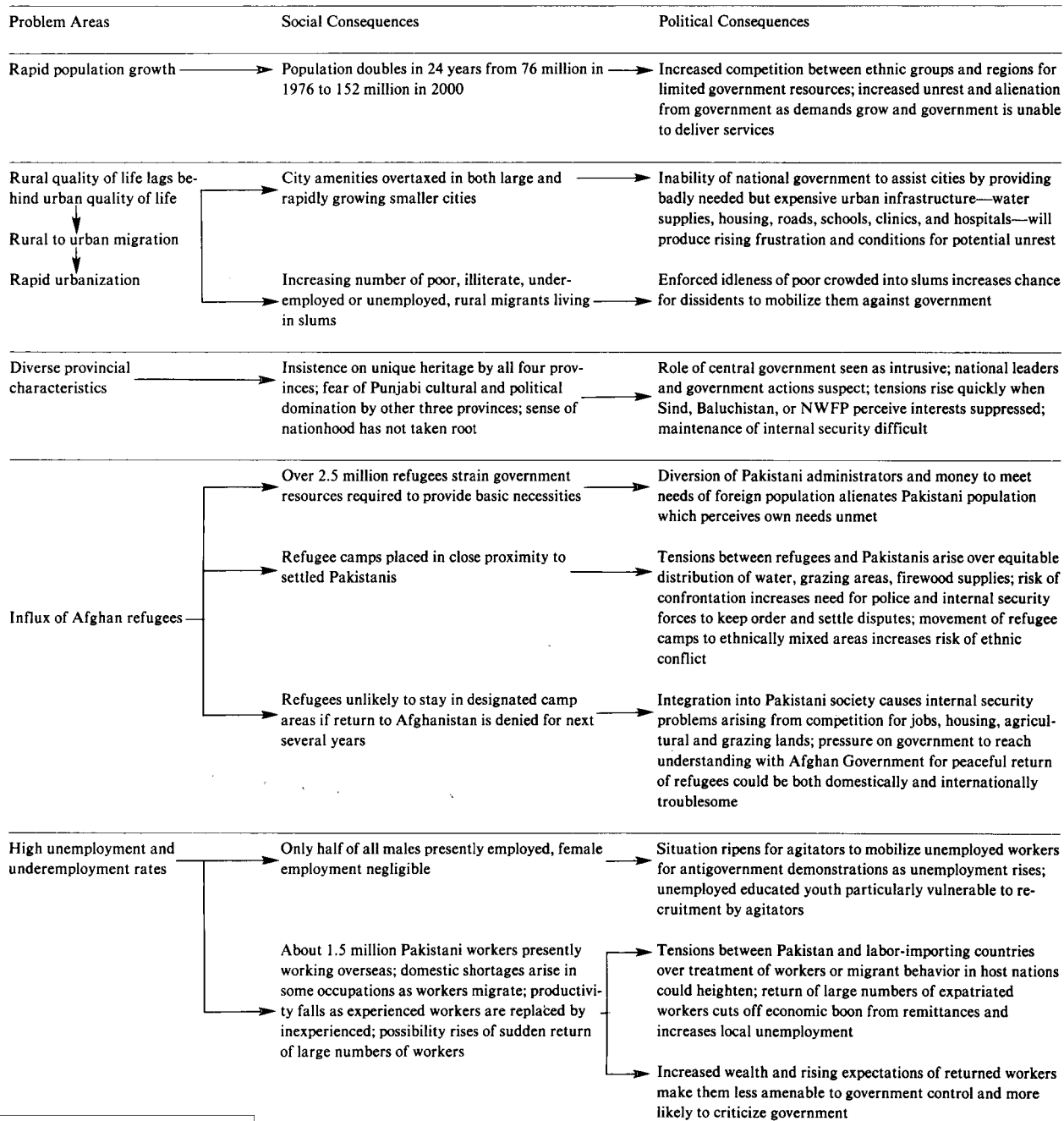


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Figure 2
Pakistan: Social and Political Consequences of Demographic Developments



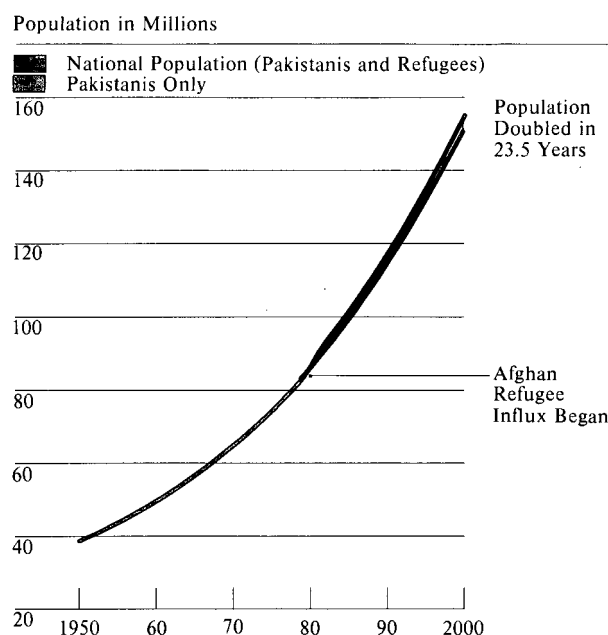
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Figure 3
Pakistan: Population Growth, 1950 to 2000



Source: 1950-72 US Bureau of the Census, Country Demographic Profiles-Pakistan, Table 1, p. 7, March 1980. 1973-1990 US Bureau of the Census, Projection, January 1982.

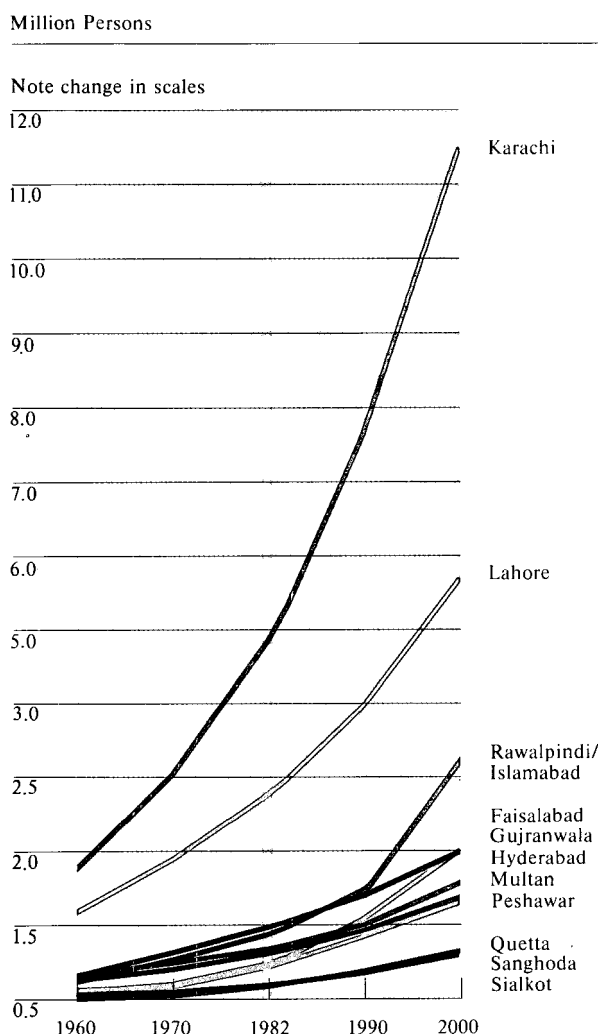
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Experience in Third World countries such as Indonesia, where substantial fertility reductions have occurred, show that both vigorous support from the top level of government and involvement of people at the grass roots to plan and manage outreach programs are essential for a successful family planning program. Neither condition prevails in Pakistan. Unless startling changes occur in the attitudes of both officials and the population, we do not believe that programs as sensitive as family planning have much chance of success.

Growth of the Cities: The Urban Tinderbox

Fed by the inflow of rural migrants, we expect growth of the cities to continue at a rapid annual pace of about 4.5 percent, the average rate over the last two decades, at least through the 1980s (figure 4). We believe that depressed conditions in the countryside

Figure 4
Pakistan: Population of Major Cities, 1960 to 2000



Source: 1960, 1970, and 1980 populations based on 1961, 1972, and 1981 census data. 1982, 1990, and 2000 populations projected by CIA based on census growth rates for 1972-81 and UN projections.

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will continue to provide the impetus for large-scale exodus to the cities. As bad as conditions may be in the cities, demographic data and reports by knowledgeable observers indicate that they are worse in the

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Table 1
Pakistan: Population Projections, Selected Years

	Total		Pakistani		Afghan Refugee Population (millions)
	Population (millions)	Average Annual Growth Rate (percent)	Population (millions)	Average Annual Growth Rate (percent)	
1980	87.4	3.7	86.5	2.8	0.9
1982	94.1	2.9	91.6	2.8	2.5
1985	102.5	2.8	99.7	2.8	2.7
1990	118.1	2.8	115.0	2.8	3.2
1995	136.0	2.7	132.3	2.7	3.7
2000	156.0		151.7		4.3

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1982, medium series projections.

Note: Projections are prepared in three series corresponding to high, medium, and low assumptions for the path of fertility decline. The medium projection is considered the most likely to occur. (See appendix for projection methodology and for high and low series.)

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countryside and are not likely to get better: employment and educational opportunities are fewer, and housing and social services are even more inadequate. Even so, we believe that the more easily mobilized urban masses constitute the greater threat to political stability. []

Pakistani Government officials are candid in their gloomy outlook for the future of the cities and in their assessments of the government's ability to bring about real improvements. According to Pakistani newspapers, the Punjab and Sind provincial governors have noted the acute and multiplying problems large cities face as a result of the continuing influx of rural people and the natural increase of the urban population; all existing services are under tremendous pressure, and many Western observers believe that some—such as transport, electricity, sanitation, and water supply—are near the breaking point. Editorials in Karachi and Lahore newspapers characterize the problems with language such as “depressingly awesome” and speak of the “misery and squalor found in the shantytowns that are a permanent feature of the urban scene.” []

We believe that national and local urban development schemes proposed in the Fifth Five-Year Plan and by government directives are inadequate to address the magnitude of urban infrastructure problems and the plight of slum dwellers. They do, however, encourage a perception among urban people of federal concern. A federal directive to provincial governments to step up improvements in slum areas by granting property rights to slum residents occupying public lands has been reported prominently in newspapers to have the personal backing of President Zia. While provincial governments report that thousands of slum dwellers have received title to their land, the presence of 2 million slum dwellers in Karachi alone and the history of unkept promises by political parties, politicians, and bureaucrats to resolve this longstanding problem make it unlikely in our view that Zia will be able to accomplish his goals. []

Given the concentrations of people suffering common problems, we expect rapid growth of the cities to contribute to the stresses of urban life that, in turn,

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Karachi: Profile of a Third World Metropolis

Problems faced by Third World cities are mirrored in Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and only port. At independence it burst into urban dominance, drawing migrants from all parts of Pakistan to share in the opportunities afforded by its industrial and commercial growth. Rapid population growth and low urban investment have since resulted in shortages in essential services and in haphazard development, compounded by local incapacity to deal with the problems.

- *Karachi's current population is 5.4 million, 6 percent of Pakistan's total population and 22 percent of its urban population. We estimate that nearly 300,000 persons will be added every year between 1982 and 1990; about one-third of them will be migrants, largely unskilled and illiterate. By 1990 approximately 7.8 million persons will live in Karachi and an estimated 11.6 million by the year 2000.*

- *Between 1.4 million and 2 million persons currently live in Karachi's slums, with the average family of six to seven living in one or two rooms. Nearly 50 percent of slum dwellers are general laborers, over half unskilled; about 10 percent have white-collar jobs; the remaining 40 percent are self-employed or do "miscellaneous" jobs.*
- *Only 30 percent of households had water connections in 1974, 20 percent had sewer connections, and less than half of city refuse, accumulating at 1,500 to 2,000 tons per day, was collected and disposed of. We do not believe that these services have been appreciably extended.*
- *Commuting time is long and costly; buses are overcrowded, run irregularly, and are too few in number to serve the population.*

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may translate into political activism and a threat to the regime. Urban interest groups—labor unions, professional and trade associations, student societies, and neighborhood and ethnic alliances—have long been the voices of political dissatisfaction over issues such as low wages, lack of jobs, shortages of housing, inadequate water systems, and congested transport systems.

The cities are also the traditional battleground for Pakistan's ethnic groups. It is here, in enforced proximity, that they compete for jobs and services, exacerbating underlying distrust and ethnic enmities. Historic antipathies and rivalries, tribal and regional politics, and intrigues swirl through the cosmopolitan atmospheres of Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore. We believe that the charged tensions arising from rapid social and economic change are present even in smaller cities, in particular the provincial capitals of

Quetta and Peshawar, which have been transformed from quiet backwaters into boom towns by the several refugee crises.

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Our assessment is that the greatest potential for serious instability lies within the overpopulated and politically pressurized limits of the four largest urban areas—Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Rawalpindi/ Islamabad—which comprise about 43 percent of Pakistan's urban population and 12 percent of its total population. The demonstrations and riots that led to the fall of Presidents Ayub Khan in 1969 and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977 were centered in these cities. Urban interest groups representing the lower and middle classes were allied under opposition parties to bring about the downfall of Ayub Khan.

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Among them were students, teachers, organized industrial workers, menial service ranks from government departments, and rural migrants living in slum areas. These same classes were mobilized in the overthrow of Bhutto eight years later, but this time they were linked with a highly religious ideology fostered by Islamic fundamentalist parties. []

Turbulence in these large cities continues to occur under Zia's Martial Law Administration—student agitation and teacher and labor union strikes—although it is not yet of the magnitude or as organized as the disturbances in the mid-1970s prior to the downfall of Bhutto. We believe, however, that the government's inability to improve social and economic conditions probably will ultimately lead to the formation of antiregime coalitions among the interest groups. []

As reported in World Bank surveys throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, in the Pakistani press, and in the official five-year plans, little increase in the standard of living has occurred in the 35 years since independence. There still is an excess of labor relative to available jobs, and opportunities for advancement through education are limited. The educated unemployed, mostly young men concentrated in the cities, form a potentially volatile group that we believe could be easily mobilized to vent their frustration on the establishment.¹ []

We expect that rapid growth in smaller cities, a phenomenon that began in the 1970s, will further augment the stress put on the national government by urban governments barely able to cope with their growing problems. The Fifth Five-Year Plan says little about the sometimes spectacular growth in these cities, concentrating its development plans instead on services for the four largest metropolises. (Two urban areas in the 500,000 to 1 million range, Peshawar and Gujranwala, have annual growth rates of 7 to 8

¹ A World Bank study on Pakistan in 1978 calls the unemployment of the educated "one of the most serious, most discussed and least changed of the economic and educational problems of the last 10 years." A 1972 survey showed that 47 percent of graduates from the three Punjabi universities were unemployed three to four years after graduation. Only 15 percent said they had ever had jobs. Partial evidence for 1975 indicated that the surplus in most skilled work areas was growing. []

percent and have doubled their populations over the past 10 years.) We believe that the governments of these smaller cities will soon add strident demands to those of the larger urban governments for increased services and development aid. Growing alienation from government could develop as their populations see their needs squeezed out by the greater political pressures brought to bear by the larger cities. []

Provincial Rivalries: The Search for National Identity

Provincialism continues to be the hallmark of Pakistani politics. A shared devotion to Islam, stressed by President Zia in his Islamization policies, has not overcome the problems of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural rivalries that divide the people of the four provinces.² We expect these divisions to continue to frustrate central government aims to foster a sense of national identity through the 1980s. []

All observers agree that the minority Sindhis, Baluchs, and Pushtuns resent the more numerous Punjabis and their domination of the Army and the central government (figure 5). The Punjabis profess that their sacrifices at the time of partition from India give them the authority to control the national government. Studies of the Punjabi power base by US scholars suggest further that Punjabis consider the other provincial peoples are "backward" and need strong control and direction in order to become "true" Pakistanis. The scholars claim that the people of the other three provinces resent such implications, believe that their cultures are threatened, and distrust intrusion of the central government into their affairs on one hand but charge government neglect on the other. Movements for separatism or greater autonomy by all three provinces have plagued every central government since partition and remain, in our view, an ever-present danger to the political stability of the country. []

² None of the four provinces—Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP)—are exclusively the home of the ethnic groups that gave them their name or form the majority, but all four project the unique characteristics of the dominant ethnic group. []

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Pakistan: Provincial Social and Political Profiles

Punjab: Punjab is the most populous province with an estimated 52 million people. It is also the most developed and exerts the greatest degree of political influence on the national government. The Punjabis since independence have demanded and achieved a dominant position in most governmental decision-making processes. Punjabi society is more heavily influenced by its long association with the Hindu caste system in prepartition India than by the more egalitarian precepts of Islam. Punjabi social structure is rooted in the rich farmlands of the province and in the landed gentry who own them. Landlords exert power through kinship and patron-client networks.

Sind: The political, social, and economic problems of Sind are rooted in the social dynamics that shaped the province at the time of Pakistan's independence. Several million refugees from India (muhajirs) fled to Sind, including to Karachi and other urban centers, and by virtue of greater wealth, education, and economic expertise, gained control of the private sector from the indigenous Sindhis. Few Sindhis profited from their experiences under the new Pakistani Government. Embattled Sindhis still believe that outsiders are about to overwhelm them even though they comprise about 60 percent of the provincial population (21 million persons) while only 30 percent are muhajirs and 5 percent each are Pushtuns and Punjabis. The majority of Sindhis are either urban poor or impoverished peasants under the domination of feudal landlords.

North West Frontier Province (NWFP): Out of the approximately 14 million people in the NWFP the Pushtun tribesmen are numerically superior, although the province is home to several other ethnic groups. Pushtuns are divided into many distinct tribal units, with a tradition of blood feuds and

intertribal warfare. Most Pushtuns live in agricultural villages in the settled areas, while an estimated 3 million nomads and seminomads live in the mountainous regions of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). In the so-called protected areas of the FATA, the government has established access through a steady economic development program. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the pace of this development has increased. The unprotected areas, where tribal law rules alone, are rapidly diminishing.

The government has, since the early days of nationhood, recruited large numbers of Pushtuns into the Army and into heavy construction. Despite efforts at integration, however, Pushtun leaders have frequently called for a Pushtun homeland to include fellow tribesmen in Afghanistan. With the imposition of the Marxist regime in Kabul and the flight of more than 2 million Afghan Pushtuns into the NWFP, however, loyalties have at least temporarily swung to the Pakistan Government.

Baluchistan: Baluchistan is the historical home of the more than 400 Baluch tribes who comprise a little over half of the 4.5 million population. Pushtuns form a large minority, and Punjabis and Sindhis together represent 5 to 10 percent of the population. The Baluch tribal groups operate under a semifederal political system that exercises administrative, political, and social authority over the clans. The tribes are suspicious of one another, often in conflict, and maintain an independent and provincial outlook that brings them into confrontation with the central government. Long-herd calls for autonomy have been muted by President Zia's less strident handling of Baluch concerns than that of governments before him, and by the specter of Soviet troops on their doorstep in Afghanistan.

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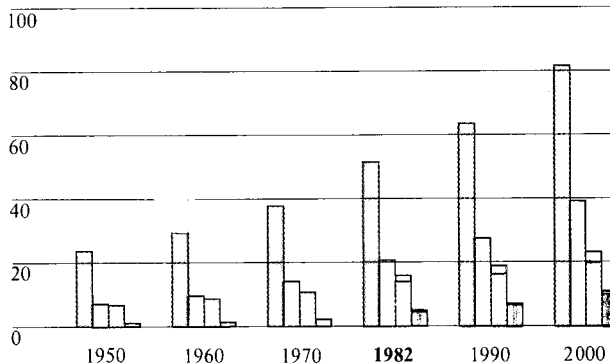
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Figure 5
Pakistan: National and Provincial Populations
for Selected Years

Population in Millions

☐ Punjab
☐ Sind
☐ North West Frontier Province
☐ Baluchistan
☐ Afghan Refugees



Source: National figures and total number of refugees estimated by US Bureau of the Census. Provincial figures and refugee distribution estimated by CIA based on growth rates from 1961 and 1972 censuses and refugee distribution in 1982.

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The perceived government domination by Punjabis is borne out by the facts: an official 1977 government survey shows that 53 percent of the nearly 112,000 civil servants are from Punjab, while only 26 percent are from Sind, 11 percent from NWFP, and 3 percent from Baluchistan. (About 7 percent of government employees did not respond to the survey.)³ The Army is even more heavily Punjabi; a 1980 US Embassy report estimates about 80 percent of Army personnel is Punjabi, 15 percent Pushtun, and 5 percent Baluch and Sindhi. The officer corps, according to Western analysts, endorses a strong central government as well

³ As illustrated in figure 5, we estimate that the proportion of Punjabis in the civil service is actually less than their overall population in the country and that, among the minorities, only the Baluch and Pushtun are underrepresented in government jobs. Nonetheless, the minorities resent the greater Punjabi government representation.

as Zia's Islamization program as a means to unify a country comprised of ethnic groups in different stages of political and social development.

We believe that the minorities' resentment toward the Punjabi-dominated government has been exacerbated under Zia's Martial Law Administration (MLA) in which political parties have been banned and elections indefinitely postponed. The 350-member Federal Advisory Council, all of whose members are appointed by the President and whose sessions are held only at his invitation, does not provide a popular grass-roots political voice for the provinces. A nationwide crack-down on "antisocial and subversive elements" in February 1981, while ostensibly intended to demonstrate Zia's responsiveness to the Council's concerns about a perceived breakdown in public order, instead sharpened provincial antagonisms, according to US Embassy reporting. The Embassy estimated that 7,200 people were detained, almost all in Sind and Punjab. Public opinion in Sind, where many political party activists were detained as well as criminals, held that Sind was the main target of the crackdown and added this to the list of Sindhi grievances against the government, according to US Embassy evaluations.

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In our view, government actions against relatively moderate minority political leaders, even though they had in the past criticized the government and called for elections and are therefore considered to be "anti-regime," fuel the frustrations so close to the surface of Baluch and Pushtun political consciousness. For example, even though the ban on political meetings is sometimes overlooked by the government, a meeting in May 1982 of the Executive Committee of the Baluch- and Pushtun-based National Democratic Party in Punjab was broken up on orders of the Punjab Governor. Three respected leaders of the party were expelled from Punjab, and 20 more were arrested, according to newspaper accounts.

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President Zia's policy of promoting economic and social development in Baluchistan and the NWFP—the so-called lagging regions—to foster national integration has not gotten off the ground, and it may even

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aggravate provincial tensions, in our view. Sindhis charge that their needs are being neglected to the benefit of the two less developed provinces. Given the geographic dispersion of the population of Baluchistan and the NWFP, Zia's programs for agricultural aid, water resource development, educational facilities, and health care systems will be expensive. We expect that progress will be slow, that the population of these provinces will continue to charge neglect, and that political activists will continue to lobby for greater autonomy. []

The steadfast refusal of all Pakistani governments, including the Zia administration, to grant autonomy to any of the provinces or even to meet minority demands for greater representation in their provincial governments continues to fuel the political passions of the minorities. Zia granted amnesty in 1977 to tribal leaders who had been in rebellion under Bhutto in the hope that this would produce calm and augment loyalty to the government. But this step did nothing to satisfy provincial autonomy goals, and Islamabad continues to place Punjabis in key administrative posts in all provinces as well as in most top national-level civilian and military positions. The minorities, according to provincial leaders, argue that their qualified candidates are not given adequate consideration for these jobs and that autonomy is the only way to gain control over their own areas. While Zia has managed to achieve a surface calm, we believe that the underlying unrest remains a threat to stability. []

Afghan Refugees: An Added Burden

We expect that the Afghan refugees will present a problem of increasing complexity and a growing threat to Pakistan's internal stability throughout the 1980s. We believe that the sheer size of the refugee population—the largest in the world—will strain the government's ability to accommodate the refugees as well as its ability to limit their threat to political stability.⁴ The US Census Bureau estimated that there were 2.5 million refugees in Pakistan as of mid-1982, based on the numbers of refugees registered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

between 1979 and the end of 1981, estimated net gains of 25,000 during 1982, and the estimated number of births and deaths occurring in the refugee population. The Census Bureau projects that the refugee population will reach 2.7 million by 1985 and 3.2 million by 1990, assuming that no additional refugees will arrive or be repatriated after 1982.⁵ []

While US and international observers agree that Pakistan's international prestige has been enhanced by its acceptance of the refugees and by its willingness to share its limited resources to care for them, the economic costs have been high. The government estimates its assistance costs for 1982-83 at \$555 million—over and above aid provided by international relief organizations for 1982 of \$230-250 million.⁶ []

Most refugees are Pushtun tribesmen who, [] have been received as brothers by the Pakistani Pushtuns of the NWFP and Baluchistan, and as Muslim brothers in need by all Pakistanis. Despite these ethnic ties, government authorities say that preservation of public order is their greatest concern in the two volatile tribal areas where nearly all refugees reside. Pakistani officials have reported only one significant disturbance involving locals and refugees: last June more than a hundred were killed in sectarian fighting in

⁵ Estimates by various organizations on the size of the refugee population ranged between 2 million and 2.7 million during spring and summer 1982. The Pakistani Government estimate, based on renewed efforts by Pakistani relief officials to count camp populations, was 2.7 million as of 31 July 1982. Although officials say that net inflow was "only a trickle" during the first half of 1982, they still expect an increase to 3 million by the end of the year. UN agencies and the US Embassy believe that government numbers are overstated. UN agencies in May 1982 agreed to provide food rations for 2.2 million refugees rather than dispute numbers; the US Embassy reported in March 1982 that they used 2 million as an informal working number. We believe that the US Census Bureau estimate, based on both UN camp registrations and documented demographic growth assumptions, is reasonable and can be used with some degree of confidence. (See appendix for Census Bureau methodology.) []

⁶ [] Pakistani costs should be considerably lower than the government's official estimate—on the order of only \$80-100 million. [] the difference between Pakistani and Western estimates to inclusion in the assistance estimate of indirect costs such as road and railway repair, law enforcement, reclamation of devastated forest and grazing areas, and reimbursement for damage to private properties. []

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Figure 6
Afghan Refugee Camps in Pakistan



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Kurram Agency that also involved Afghan refugees. Officials fear that even minor disagreements between refugees and the local population or between rival refugee groups could lead to a pattern of increasingly serious incidents, according to US Embassy reporting.

US Embassy officials report that Islamabad, which is concerned that unrest could be exploited by Soviet-sponsored agents, has adopted preventive measures:

- Refugee camps have been deliberately situated away from more populous centers.
- Refugee areas are rigorously policed.
- Grazing, water, and land rights have been carefully defined between locals and refugees.
- Where resentment toward refugee aid has been vocal, local inhabitants have been granted aid commensurate with that given to the refugees, or restitution has been made by the government to the aggrieved party.

Although Islamabad must necessarily devote most of its refugee management resources to immediate problems, a few officials and other prominent Pakistanis have speculated on the social and economic ramifications for both refugees and Pakistanis of an extended or permanent refugee stay. They fear the economic burden of continued support and express concern over the ability of Pakistan to absorb peacefully and productively such a large foreign population. We believe that unless a solution is reached in Afghanistan in the next few years, the increased demands of the refugees will put enormous pressures on the balance that the government strives to maintain between basic care for the Afghans and the needs of its own population, much of which is no better off materially than the refugees. Barring a further large migration—which we do not expect—we believe that support from both the Pakistani Government and international organizations can probably preserve relative calm over the next two or three years. Beyond that time frame, however, Pakistan in our view will increasingly be faced with pressures to integrate at least some of the refugees into Pakistani society.

Even though Pakistan has had the painful experience of integrating, amid great social chaos, large numbers of refugees, first from India in 1947 and then from Bangladesh in 1971, we believe that a repetition of such events would meet with both social and political opposition. According to both Western and Pakistani observers, the NWFP, with over 2 million refugees, already is reaching the saturation point in terms of suitable land available for refugee camps. Reluctant refugees are being moved from overcrowded border regions to more remote and increasingly marginal lands. Some camps may eventually have to be opened in Punjab, well away from Pushtun ethnic areas. Although government officials say that such a move would be acceptable to Punjabis on the basis of Islamic ties, we believe that ethnic, cultural, and linguistic differences between Pushtuns and Punjabis would produce strained relations or even open violence.

We expect entry of refugees into the economic mainstream to occur with accelerating frequency as the refugees' stay lengthens. Pakistani officials report that a small number of Afghans who brought goods or capital with them have already entered into small transportation or commercial businesses in the NWFP, as well as in the cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad; officials say that there are several thousand living in Sind Province. These relatively few Afghans, although apparently highly visible, have been absorbed into the economy. But the absorption of large numbers of refugees, mostly uneducated farmers or nomads, into the already overburdened economy would present the government with a far more serious challenge, in our opinion.

Labor Emigration: Short-term Benefits, Long-Term Challenges

Temporary labor emigration to the Middle East has substantial short-term benefits for Pakistan but, in our judgment, poses a threat to economic and social stability over the long run. The approximately 1.5 million workers overseas represent about 5 percent of

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the total labor force.⁷ Labor emigration relieves immediate pressures on the domestic labor market that, according to official Pakistani data, can employ efficiently only about half of all eligible male workers. Worker migration is described in economic development literature as well as by some Pakistani officials and foreign observers as a "safety valve," drawing large numbers of low-paid workers, the unemployed, or the socially disaffected away from the domestic scene. We believe that in the short term there is some validity to this assumption but that, in the long term, the roots of labor instability reside in the domestic labor force, with the 95 percent of workers who do not reap the benefits of overseas employment. []

The flow of remittances from migrant wages, rising from \$339 million in 1976 to more than \$2 billion in 1981, according to official data, has aided the Pakistani economy and figures prominently in government decisions to maximize the worker exodus. In relative terms, worker remittances currently are equal to about 70 percent of the value of imports. The official figures do not include large sums, possibly another \$1-2 billion according to guesses by local bankers, brought home by migrants personally or sent through unofficial middlemen. []

According to a survey conducted by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, average annual earnings of Pakistani workers in the Middle East are \$5,800, nearly \$5,000 more than they would have earned in Pakistan. The survey estimates that the average worker sends about \$2,800 home annually. Of this, the migrants' household consumes 62 percent and invests only 13 percent in savings or other investments. According to US Embassy reporting, the government has been disappointed that so little has gone into productive investments. We believe, however, that the government underestimates the workers' economic impact. Their purchase of consumer goods

⁷ Our estimate of 1.5 million workers is based on survey data showing 1.25 million workers in early 1980 and government estimates of workers departures since that time. The survey, conducted by the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, estimated about three-fourths of the workers were in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, with the remainder in Kuwait, Libya, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman. []

may ultimately channel funds into productive investment as sellers of these items reinvest or increase their own consumption, thereby recycling the worker's funds through the economy. []

Despite an overall excess of labor in the domestic labor force, World Bank reports show that shortages that have developed in some categories as a result of the migration have retarded Pakistan's economic development. According to data from recruitment agencies, skilled and experienced general laborers are more likely to emigrate than the unskilled. World Bank analysis shows that skilled laborers' places in the domestic work force have been taken by less 25X1 skilled or inexperienced persons, which has created a drop in domestic productivity. Vocational training schemes have so far failed to fill the gap, according to the World Bank. [] 25X1

In our view, the Pakistani Government has undertaken insufficient long-term planning to meet the social and economic problems that will arise when the Middle East job boom ends. Labor Ministry officials, who believe that the overseas demand for Pakistani labor will remain high at least through the 1980s, 25X1 concentrate on maximizing and regulating the flow. We are not certain that the demand will remain high. Although we believe that Middle East labor needs will continue, Pakistani workers may face increasing competition for jobs from workers from East and Southeast Asia. A World Bank migration study, moreover, foresees a trend developing in favor of specialized and professional labor at the expense of the nonspecialists and unskilled as Middle East development projects move into a new stage. If so, the opportunities for emigration by the nonspecialized and unskilled laborers may decline before the end of the decade. This development would hurt Pakistan's economy by reducing worker remittances. It would also throw the bulk of the overseas workers back on the ill-prepared domestic labor market. []

We expect that social problems will intensify as increasing numbers of migrants return home with money, new experiences, and higher expectations. The

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money earned abroad can move the returned migrants into the middle class with enhanced community standing. We believe that this elevated status increases their resistance to the autocratic demands of landlords, tribal leaders, political leaders, and employers. Pakistani social scientists have documented instances where the political and social powers of traditional leaders have been successfully challenged by returned workers. They have also cited cases where the shift of family power from father to sons or to other family members during the absence of the father has created conflict within the family. We believe that the perceptions of inequality among the poorly paid local workers may also strain relations between them and the "newly rich" returned migrants. Such incidents are only beginning to be recognized and documented, but as the migration stretches out in time and more migrants return, we expect that pervasive social change, always unsettling in a traditional society, may occur. []

Outlook

We expect Pakistan's manifold demographic and ethnic problems to continue unabated through the rest of the century and, in a worst case, could combine with other factors to topple the Zia regime or its successors. Social tensions developed over competition for dwindling resources and services, especially in overcrowded urban environments, almost certainly will present opportunities for antiregime agitators to recruit followers. []

Ethnic and provincial tensions will continue to threaten the nation's uneasy surface calm and prevent national integration, in our judgment. Continued concentration of political power among the majority Punjabis, making second-class citizens of Sindhis, Baluchs, Pushtuns, and other minority groups, will offer opposition leaders opportunities to attract adherents in the name of Islamic unity and egalitarianism. []

In our view, heightened awareness among Pakistanis that the Afghan refugees may become permanent residents and compete for limited jobs and services will increasingly stretch Pakistani hospitality in spite of their ethnic ties with the refugees. We believe that

the danger of local flareups between the two groups will mount as frustrations heighten and the refugees' stay lengthens. If the situation in Afghanistan does not permit the refugees to return over the next several years, we expect pressures to build among the refugees to settle elsewhere in Pakistan. Under such circumstances, we believe that the already strained ethnic relations in the country will worsen as Pushtun and other tribesmen move into nontribal areas. []

Should Soviet actions inside Afghanistan push large numbers of new refugees into Pakistan, the pressures on the Pakistanis as well as on the international aid organizations would intensify. Although we do not believe the Soviets would see an advantage in a further depletion of the Afghan population, we do believe that the Soviets could see their interests well served by a selective depletion of troublesome Afghan tribal groups while at the same time laying the groundwork in Pakistan for further social, political, and economic upheaval by increasing the size of the refugee population there. US-Pakistani relations would be tested under such a scenario as the financial capabilities of the United Nation and other international organizations, which are heavily funded by the United States, were stretched. []

While we expect the overseas laborers to be a major force for economic growth, at least during most of this decade, the returned "newly rich" migrant, determined to find a social niche commensurate with his economic status, may make unanticipated changes in the traditional society. As the number of returned workers grows, they could increasingly become the agents of social change at the grass-roots level, thereby indirectly influencing the nation's future political course. We believe that if the job market in the Middle East shrinks or is altered, or the political climate changes so as to squeeze all or many of the Pakistani workers out of the overseas market, the loss of worker remittances as well as the search by the returned workers for domestic employment could badly damage the Pakistani economy and upset political stability. []

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Appendix

Data Quality and Projection Methodology

Data Quality

Demographic data from four Pakistani censuses and six national surveys are characterized by major deficiencies, according to UN, US, Canadian, and Pakistani demographers. The data are contradictory between sets and internally inconsistent. []

The 1951 and 1961 censuses are criticized for both content and coverage: they were inadequately planned and administered; too many questions were asked, thereby eliciting incomplete and inaccurate responses; and because many people were still in refugee status and tribal areas were inaccessible to enumerators, the country was not completely canvassed. []

The 1972 census was conducted 18 months later than originally scheduled, due mostly to the 1971 war and loss of the eastern wing that subsequently became Bangladesh as well as disarray in the census organization. The census was conducted during a period of heightened political sensitivities in the aftermath of the war and coincided with widespread language riots in Sind, leading to a lively demographic argument through the years over whether the census undercounted or overcounted selected areas. Publication of results was not completed until 1978. []

Only provisional statistics for total populations of provinces, divisions, districts, and 12 major cities are so far available from the 1981 census. Data have been collected for the first time in the country's history under generally favorable political conditions and with improved census organization and broader geographic coverage over previous efforts. For the first time data were collected on an individual basis in most tribal areas where tribal elders had previously provided only personal estimates of the population under their control. []

Methodology

The US Census Bureau prepared population projections for 1979 through 2000 in three series—low, medium, and high. For each of the series, figures were

Table 2

Assumed Mortality and Fertility Levels for the Projection Period: Selected Years, 1979 to 2000

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	Expectation of Life at Birth (for all projection series) Years		Total fertility rate (births per woman)		
	Males	Females	Low	Medium	High
1979	52.5	50.5	6.81	6.91	7.01
1982	53.3	51.7	6.59	6.76	6.95
1990	55.4	54.9	5.96	6.32	6.66
2000	58.1	58.9	5.00	5.50	6.00

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1982.

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provided for the projected Pakistani population, the population of Afghan refugees, and the combined total of the two. []

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Pakistani Population. The base population is the population as counted in the 1972 census, adjusted by the Census Bureau using available census and survey information and projected to 1979. The 1979-2000 populations were then projected by age and sex using a component projection model with a single mortality assumption and three separate fertility assumptions. For the projection period, mortality conditions were assumed to improve with a resulting increase in the expectation of life at birth; fertility was assumed to decline throughout the period. []

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Afghan Refugees. The Census Bureau used refugee data from reports by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the US Department of State. The UNHCR classifies refugees in camps as follows: children of both sexes; adult males; and adult females. This breakdown allows a comparison of the reported refugee population with the age

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Table 3
Reported and Projected Increases in the
Number of Afghan Refugees in Pakistan:
1979 to 1983

	Additional Afghan Refugees Entering Pakistan During the Year
Reported	
1979	402,100
1980	1,026,151
1981	947,074
Projected	
1982	24,675
1983 and thereafter	0

Source: Reported figures from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the US Department of State. Projected figures from the US Bureau of the Census.

[REDACTED]

and sex composition of the estimated population of Afghanistan. This comparison suggests that the refugees represent a cross section of the Afghan population; that none of the three age-sex groups is over-represented relative to the Afghan population in Afghanistan. The three age-sex groups were further broken down into five-year-age groups using the estimates for the Afghanistan population as a guide.

[REDACTED]

Refugees have been entering Pakistan for only slightly over three years. Available data for the second half of 1981 suggest that the numbers were beginning to decrease. Based on this declining trend, the Census Bureau assumed a total of 2.4 million persons as the total number of refugees by the end of 1982—an implied increase of about 25,000 refugees over the end of 1981. Fertility and mortality levels in the refugee population were assumed to be the same as for the Pakistani population throughout the projection period. Because the Census Bureau assumed that after 1982 the net flow of refugees would cease, and further, that there would be no return movement before the end of the projection period, the projected increases in the refugee population after 1982 occur only through natural increase. [REDACTED]

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Table 4
Pakistan: Selected Midyear Population Estimates

Midyear	High Series		Medium Series		Low Series	
	Total Population (thousands)	Growth Rate (percent)	Total Population (thousands)	Growth Rate (percent)	Total Population (thousands)	Growth Rate (percent)
Total Population						
1980	87,606	3.3	87,442	3.2	87,277	3.1
1985	103,163	3.0	102,481	2.8	101,843	2.7
1990	119,730	3.0	118,139	2.8	116,616	2.6
1995	138,959	2.9	136,046	2.7	133,014	2.5
2000	160,935		156,038		150,893	
Pakistanis Only						
1980	86,674	2.9	86,510	2.8	86,345	2.8
1985	100,402	3.0	99,733	2.8	99,108	2.7
1990	116,508	3.0	114,956	2.8	113,471	2.6
1995	135,180	2.9	132,343	2.7	129,393	2.5
2000	156,507		151,742		146,737	
Afghan Refugees						
1980	932	21.7	932	21.6	932	21.5
1985	2,762	3.1	2,747	2.9	2,735	2.8
1990	3,222	3.2	3,182	3.0	3,145	2.8
1995	3,779	3.2	3,702	3.0	3,621	2.8
2000	4,428		4,296		4,156	

Source: US Census Bureau projections, 1982.

Note: Detailed age-sex breakdowns for the three projection series are available from the author of this report.

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